governed words as do *kâna* and its other sisters. (cf. al-Anbârî 1945: 99–102; Hasan 1974: 562).

The above examples show how the main traditional schools differ in the approach they take to governing elements in the Arabic sentence. (cf. Abdeljaber 1985: 92-93; Levin 1995).

4.6 Critics of the theory of government

Some Arab linguists, instead of assuming either an expressed or an abstract governing element in a sentence, believe that the governor is God, the creator of the language. Some Arab linguists argue that the governor is the speaker who uses the language. This argument can be found in the work of linguists such as Ibn Madâ' (1988: 77), who called for the abolition of the theory of government:

ammâ madhhabu ahl al-ḥaq fa inna hâdhih-i al-aṣwât innamâ hiya min fi'l Allâh ta'âlâ wa innamâ tunsabu ilâ al-insân kamâ yunsab-u ilayh sâ'ir af'âlih al-ikhtiyâriyyah, wa ammâ al-qawl bi-anna al-alfâẓ yuḥdith-u ba'ḍuhâ ba'ḍ-an fa-bâṭil-un 'aql-an wa shar'-an lâ yaqûl-u bihi aḥad-un min al-'uqalâ'

As far as the opinion of bearers of truth is [concerned], these vowels [parsing signs] are created by Almighty God and they are apportioned to man like any other of his freely chosen acts. But to say that words influence each other is false both logically and religiously. No able minded person would accept this.

The argument that the governing agent is the speaker of the words himself, on the other hand, can also be found in Ibn Jinnî (1957 vol. 1, pp. 109–110):

fa-ammâ fî al-ḥaqîqah wa maḥṣûl al-ḥadîth fa al-'amal min al-raf' wa al-naṣb wa al-jarr wa al-jazm innamâ huwa li al-mutakallim nafsih lâ li-shay'-in ghayrih

In fact, the speaker makes the effect, with its nominative, accusative, genitive or jussive representations himself and no one else.

It is clear from the passages quoted above that neither Ibn Maḍâ' nor Ibn Jinnî were trying to put forward an interpretation of the theory of government. Instead, they were both trying to destroy its pillars. The argument that the sentences the speaker uses are God-given and that grammarians have no right to explain the reasons for their being in this form is a call for the destruction of the theory. It is also an attempt to prohibit any effort to study sentence structure. Moreover, the argument that the influencing agent is the speaker himself means that the speaker composes sentences in complete freedom, which contradicts the observation of grammarians. This view also does not take into account the efforts that have been made to discover rules and general theories based on accurate observation of the language rather than grammarians' own imaginings.

Ibn Maḍâ' al-Qurṭubî (592/1195) set out his views on this subject in his book *al-Radd 'alâ al-Nuḥâh* (Refutation of the Grammarians), in which he claims that the abolition of this theory would make grammar much easier to learn. He argues (1988: 85) that the parsing signs on the last radicals of words bear no

relation to the function of the word in the sentence. In his introduction he writes (1988: 76):

qaṣdî fî hâdhâ al-kitâb an aḥdhifa min al-nahw mâ yastaghnî al-nahwî 'anh-u wa unabbih 'alâ mâ ajma'û 'alâ al-khaṭa' fîh fa min dhâlika iddi'â'uhum anna al-naṣba wa al-khafḍa wa al-jazm lâ yakûn-u illâ bi-'âmil-in lafẓî aw bi-'âmil-in ma'nawî

My aim in this book is to remove from grammar what a grammarian does not need and to draw attention to erroneous views, such as the [grammarians'] claim that the *naṣb* [the accusative or subjunctive ending], the *khafḍ* [genitive ending] and the *jazm* [the jussive ending] cannot occur without an expressed or an abstract element.

Ibn Maḍâ' wished to remove from Arabic grammar everything that is too complex and too philosophical. Thus, he concentrated his attack on the theory of government and called for its abolition, just as he also called for the abolition of what grammarians call second and third type causation (cf. Chapter Two).

One contemporary Arab linguist who strongly opposes the theory of government is Ibrâhîm Anîs, who expressed his views this issue in his book *min asrâr al-'Arabiyyah*. He devotes a whole chapter, entitled *qiṣṣat al-i'râb*, to his criticisms. He claims in this chapter that parsing signs are an artifact of grammarians (1978: 198). In another chapter, entitled *laysa li al-ḥarakah al-i'arâbiyyah madlûl*, (ibid.: 237), he also claims:

lam takun al-ḥarakât al-i'râbiyyah tuḥaddid al-ma'ânî fî adhhân al-'arab al-qudamâ' kamâ yaz'um al-nuḥâh bal lâ ta'dû an takûna

harakât-in yuhtâj-u ilayhâ fî kathîr-in min al-ahyân li wasl-i al-kalimât ba'dihâ bi ba'd

The parsing signs did not determine the meanings in the minds of the old Bedouin Arabs as grammarians believe, and they are no more than signs which are needed in most cases to connect words with each other.

(cf. Amaireh 1987: 67 – 83; Nakamuray 1974).

To deny the presence of the parsing signs is obviously a denial of the theory of government itself, which is an explanation for the presence of parsing signs. Anîs cites some examples to explain the unimportance of the parsing signs in determining the required meaning. Among these are the following:

EXAMPLE 1

jâ'anî man bâ'a al-samak-a

jâ'anî bâi'-u al-samak-i

The person who sells fish has come to me

In the first sentence the word *al-samak-a* (the fish) is in the accusative while in the second it is in the genitive. Anîs claims that there is no difference in meaning between the two sentences.

EXAMPLE 2

sahirt-u al-laylat-a al-mâḏiyah

sahirt-u fî al-laylat-i al-mâḏiyah

I did not sleep last night

Here, in the first sentence the word *al-laylat-a* (the night) is in the accusative, while in the second sentence it is in the genitive. Anîs claims that here also there is no difference in meaning between the two sentences. He argues (1978: 240) that the dropping of the parsing signs does not change the required meaning.

While Anîs and Ibn Maḏâ' agree on the rejection of the theory of government, and demand that it be dropped altogether from Arabic grammar, disagreement between the two scholars exists, in that Anîs believes that the parsing signs on the last consonant of words are there because there is a tendency among speakers to join words together. If a speaker joins words together he needs these signs, whereas when he stops there is no need for them. Ibn Maḏâ', on the other hand, believes that the parsing signs form part of the words to which they are attached.

Anîs's total rejection of the role of the parsing signs in the required meaning is evident from the following (1978: 242):

falaysat ḥarakât-u al-i'râb fî ra'yî 'unṣur-an min 'anâṣir al-binyah fî al-kalimât wa laysat dalâ'il 'alâ al-ma'ânî kamâ yaḏunn al-nuḥâh bal inna al-aṣl fî kull kalimah huwa sukûn âkhirihâ sawâ'-un fî hâdhâ mâ yusammâ bi al-mabnî aw al-mu'rab idh yûqaf-u 'alâ kilayhimâ bi al-

sukûn wa tabqâ ma'a hâdhâ wâdihat al-sîghah lam tafqid min ma'âlimihâ shay'-an

In my view the parsing signs do not form a part of words, and they are not indicative of the meaning, as grammarians believe. The principle is that the last radicals of the words are quiescent whether these are declinable or not. In both cases one should make the last radical quiescent because words are very clear and do not lose any part of their original function.

What determines subject and object in Anîs's view is word order. He emphasises that the circumstances in which the speech was uttered assists linguists in determining the elements of the sentence (ibid.: 243). He illustrates his view by arguing that the subject of the sentence is not distinguished as a subject because it is in the nominative, nor is the object distinguished as an object because it is in the accusative. Rather, both forms are distinguished by their place in the sentence, which is determined by the style of the language. Hence, if one of the forms deviates from its normal position, it should be easy for linguists to trace it in its new position. Anîs's view can be illustrated by the following:

1. The subject in the Arabic language comes after the verb and before the direct object, as in:

   akala Zayd-un tuffâhat-an
   ate Zayd-nom. apple-acc.

   Zayd ate an apple

2. There are particular circumstances in which the direct object may come before the subject. One of these is the case of restriction (*ḥasr*), as in the following:

lâ   ya'rif-u   al-ḥubb-a   illâ   man   yukâbiduhu
no know-ind. the love-acc. except who suffer it

Only the person who endures love can understand what it feels like

The views of Anîs are rejected by most Arab linguists because the association of parsing sings with meaning has been deeply rooted in Arabic linguistic thought since its inception. The following examples serve to confirm this:

EXAMPLE 1

ḍaraba 'Amr-an Zayd-un

'Amr was hit by Zayd

Here, *Zayd-un* remains the subject despite the fact that it comes after the direct object, and *'Amr-an* remains the direct object even though it comes before the subject.

EXAMPLE 2

naḥn-u al-'Arab-u

We are the Arabs

nahn-u al-'Arab-a nukrim-u al-dayf-a

We [I mean] the Arabs show hospitality to our guests

The word *al-'Arab-u* in the first sentence is governed in the nominative, while in the second sentence it is governed in the accusative because it has a different function in each of the two sentence. In the first sentence it is a predicate and in the second sentence it is a direct object for an ellipted verb which can be estimated as *akhuss-u* (I mean), to make the assumed structure of the sentence read:

nahn-u akhass-u al-'Arab-a nukrim-u al-dayf-a

EXAMPLE 3

kam kitâb-an qara'ta

kam kitâb-in qara'ta

The word *kitâb* in the first sentence is governed in the accusative because it is functioning as *tamyîz* (specifier), and the purpose of the question is to ascertain the number of books the addressee has read, while in the second sentence it is governed in the genitive because it is a *mudâf*, and what the sentence describes is the large number of books read by the addressee (cf. Ibn al-Sarrâj 1987 vol. 1, p. 222; 'Amaireh: 1987: 81).

Anîs thinks that classical Arabic was used without vocalisation just like modern Arabic dialects. This idea can be rejected on the basis that the absence of parsing signs in modern Arabic dialects does not necessarily mean that Arabic did

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not have them in the pre-Islamic era. It can be argued that the loss of

inflections in the modern Arabic dialects is a recent phenomenon.

However, we must emphasise that not only through parsing signs we

know the function of words (cf. Abdeljaber 1985: 85; Levin 1995;

Amaireh 1987: 80-82).

Advocates of the theory of government do not dispute the fact that God

creates language. They believe that God has induced humans to use language in

various ways. They also believe that the speaker has freedom to use the language

in whichever way he chooses and freedom to form sentences in various ways.

They simply argue that all this should not stand in the way of systematic research

which aims at observing the language in order to deduce rules that may help

anyone who wishes to use language correctly as did its native speakers. They also

aim to determine the function performed by each individual element in the

sentence.

4.7 Contemporary attempts to amend the theory of government

Among contemporary Arab linguists, there are some who try to develop the

Arabic theory of sentence analysis by introducing new ideas from modern

linguistics, so that the two methodologies exist side by side. Among these is

Khalîl 'Amaireh.

'Amaireh agrees with Arab grammarians in defining the sentence as the bare minimum of words that carry the informative meaning (1987: 87). Nevertheless, he attempts to develop sentence analysis by attaching more importance to semantic elements. He draws upon the claims of transformational grammar that both the nominal and the verbal sentence may consist of a surface structure and a deep structure. He sees the principal aim of the deep structure of the sentence as being to relate information only.

'Amaireh enumerates five elements which he calls *'anâsir al-taḥwîl* (the transformational elements), which if introduced into the deep structure of sentence transform it into a surface structure. These five elements are as follows.

4.7.1 Word order

On this issue 'Amaireh adopts the view of al-Jurjânî and the Arab grammarians before him, who argue that a particular element of a sentence can be preposed for semantic purposes such as emphasis. The sentence

Zayd-un jâ'a

Zayd came.

for example has its assumed form

jâ'a Zayd-un

but the subject is placed in a preposed position for a semantic purpose (in this case, to draw attention to Zayd).

7.1.2 Augmenting

This refers to the addition of an element to the deep structure of the sentence to make it a surface structure for a semantic purpose. For example, the sentence

inna   Zayd-an   karîm-un
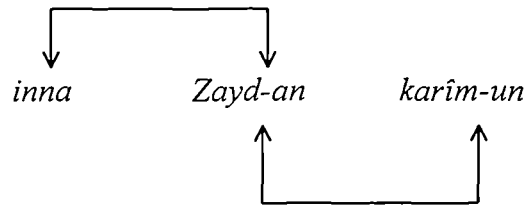
is a surface structure derived from the deep structure:

> Zayd-un karîm-un

> Zayd is generous.

The purpose of *inna* (indeed) is to provide emphasis.

4.7.3 Ellipsis

The ellipsis of an element from a sentence transforms it from a deep structure into a surface structure. For example, the sentence

> Zayd-un

as an answer to the question *man jâ'a?*. (Who came?) is a surface structure of a sentence which has the deep structure:

> jâ'a Zayd-un

> Zayd came.

However, the ellipsis has added to the sentence a semantic aspect, the purpose of which is brevity.

4.7.4 Parsing signs

'Amaireh believes that the parsing signs have a semantic value, and can transform

the sentence from a deep structure into a surface structure with a different

meaning from that of the basic sentence. For example, the sentence

> *kam kitâb-an qara't ?*

> How many books have you read ?

is a surface structure of the sentence

> *kam kitâb-in qara't*

> You have read many books

The first sentence is interrogative while the second is informative.
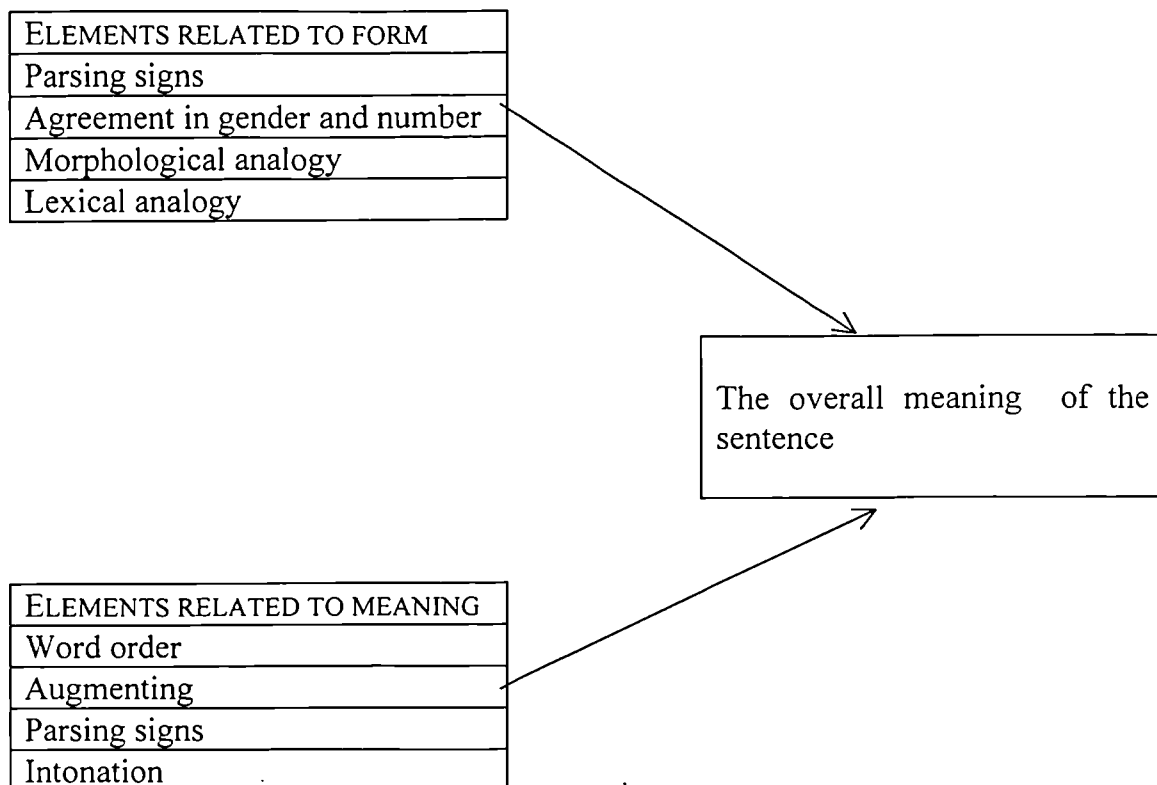
4.7.5 Intonation

'Amaireh argues that the deep structure of the sentence can also be transformed

by changing its intonation to give it a totally different meaning. For example the

sentence

> · *Zayd-un karîm-un*

can be transformed into an interrogative or an exclamatory sentence.

'Amaireh therefore disagrees with traditional grammarians over the claim

that parsing signs are the result of the influence of the governing elements on the

affected elements in the sentence. He put forward an alternative to this theory by

adopting the five elements discussed above. However, in putting forward this

alternative, he appears to maintain that Arab grammarians give the surface form

of the sentence more importance than the overall meaning it carries. For this

reason he has adopted a methodology combining both the form of the sentence

and the overall meaning of the sentence. This can be expressed diagrammatically

as follows (Amaireh 1987: 91).

ELEMENTS RELATED TO FORM
Parsing signs
Agreement in gender and number
Morphological analogy
Lexical analogy

The overall meaning of the sentence

ELEMENTS RELATED TO MEANING
Word order
Augmenting
Parsing signs
Intonation

Amaireh has attempted to eliminate some ideas from the traditional Arabic

linguistics and replace them with new ones. In other words, he argues that the

dependence of Arab linguists, especially grammarians, on the theory of

government has resulted in shortcomings in the analysis of the Arabic sentence.

The same concerns as are discussed by Amaireh can be found in the work of

another prominent contemporary Arab linguist, Tammâm Hassân, who has

adopted the concept of *ta'lîq*. This concept was put forward by al-Jurjânî in his book *Dalâ'il al-I'jâz* as an alternative to the theory of government. Ḥassân (1985: 189) suggests that the concept of *ta'lîq*, which means establishing relations between syntactical meanings and the context or situation, is more accurate than the concept of *'amal* as a means of analysing Arabic sentential structure:

wa fî ra'yî, kamâ fî r'ay 'Abdul Qâhir 'alâ aqwâ iḥtimâl anna al-ta'lîq huwa al-fikrah al-markaziyyah fî al-naḥw al-'arabî wa anna fahm al-ta'lîq 'alâ wajh-in kâf-in waḥdah-u li al-qaḍâ' 'alâ khurâfat al-'âmal al-naḥwî wa al-'awâmil al-naḥwiyyah, li-anna al-ta'lîq yuḥaddid bi-wâsiṭat al-qarâ'in ma'ânî al-abwâb fî al-siyâq wa yufassir al-'alâqât baynahâ 'alâ ṣûrat-in awfâ wa afḍal wa akthar naf'-an fî al-taḥlîl al-lughawî li-hâdhih-i al-ma'ânî al-waẓîfiyyah al-naḥwiyyah

In my view, as, most probably, in the view of 'Abdul Qâhir [al-Jurjânî], *al-ta'lîq* is the central idea in Arabic grammar and only an understanding all of its aspects will rid people of the superstition of grammatical government and its operators. This is because using the context (*al-ta'lîq*) determines the meaning of [all the grammatical] issues in the text and explains the relationship between them in a way which is more comprehensive, better and more useful in the linguistic analysis of these meanings and their grammatical functions.

Accordingly, both Amaireh and Ḥassân have been strongly influenced by al-Jurjânî's treatment of the relationship between the elements forming the sentence. However, they disagree with al-Jurjânî on the use of general statements to explain the concept of *ta'lîq*, in particular the phrase *bi-ḥasab mawqi' ba'ḍihâ min ba'd* (according to their position in relation to others).

Al-Jurjânî deals with this under a more general theory called *nazm* (construction; cf. Chapter Six). In this regard he writes (1984: 87):

wa idh qad 'arafta anna madâr-a amr al-nazm 'alâ ma'ânî al-nahw wa 'alâ al-wujûh wa al-furûq allatî min sha'nihâ an takûn-a fîh fa-i'lam anna al-furûq-a wa al-wujûh kathîrah laysa lahâ ghâyah taqif-u 'indahâ wa nihâyah lâ tajid-u lahâ izdiyâd-an ba'dahâ thumma i'lam an laysat al-maziyyah bi-wâjibah lahâ fî anfusihâ wa min hayth-u hiya 'alâ al-itlâq wa lâkin ta'rid-u bi-sabab al- ma'ânî wa al-aghrâd allatî yûda'-u lahâ al-kalâm thumma bi-hasab mawqi' ba'dihâ min ba'd

If you comprehend the influences of *nazm* on grammatical meaning and on the different circumstances that it should include, you must understand that these circumstances are too numerous and have no limits, and you must know once again that distinctions are not an end in themselves or absolute. Rather, they are mentioned to serve the meaning and objectives of the speech according to their position in relation to others.

The suggestions of Amaireh and Hassân are extremely valuable, and these linguists are probably right in criticising Arabic sentential theory. However, although these scholars have attempted to incorporate traditional Arabic linguistic theory with insights from modern linguistic theory they have not devised any concrete replacement for the basic theory put forward by traditional Arab linguists.

One can suggest that the field of Arabic Linguistics is still in need of such efforts that make classical Arabic ideas readable for the contemporary reader. At the same time we need to compare the traditional Arabic linguistic theory with

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aspects of Western linguistics without losing the uniqueness of the Arabic linguistic heritage. This is because the Arabic linguistic thinking is strongly linked with Islamic theology. This gives this scholarship a distinctive feature that cannot be matched in any other linguistic tradition.